

## **MASSEY'S DITCH CHANNEL MAINTENANCE DREDGING AND BEACH NOURISHMENT PROJECT**

### **Fact Sheet**

There are approximately one (1) dozen federally-authorized channels in the State of Delaware. It is the responsibility of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to operate and maintain the navigability of these waterways, including maintenance dredging where necessary and channel condition surveys.

Navigation funding has not kept pace with dredging and infrastructure repair costs for these federally-maintained channels. Budget requests are submitted when maintenance work is needed. However, constrained federal resources must be focused on the highest performing projects. The Massey's Ditch project does not compete well in the Corps' process for determining dredging needs and has not received federal funding since the 1970s.

In the absence of federal funding, the State has stepped in and dredged Massey's Ditch four (4) times since the 1980s. The waterway is an important navigation channel in the Inland Bays as it is the main connecting channel between Rehoboth Bay and Indian River Bay.

The upcoming project involves dredging approximately 100,000 cubic yards of material from the Massey's Ditch channel and adjacent areas. The channel will be dredged to a width of 100 feet and a depth of -7.5 feet Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW). The adjacent areas to be dredged include the entrance to Baker's Channel on the north side of Lynch Thicket Island and a large shoal between the south end of Lynch Thicket Island and Middle Island.

The material planned for dredging is primarily sand (98%) and will be used beneficially to re-nourish the eroding ocean shoreline on the north side of Indian River Inlet. Re-nourishing this section of shoreline will provide erosion and storm damage protection to the Route 1 bridge approach at the Inlet and also restore a heavily used public recreational beach area.

It is the Division of Watershed Stewardship, Shoreline and Waterway Management Section's goal to use dredged sediment in a beneficial way whenever possible. This project exemplifies that by utilizing sand removed from a shoaled channel and placing it on an eroding beach area. This example of efficient and beneficial use of dredged material is becoming the standard and will be the Section's goal in the future, whenever possible, to address channel maintenance and supplement eroded beaches and wetlands.

The purpose of the project is to improve navigation for the commercial and recreational boaters that use the Massey's Ditch channel to navigate in the Inland Bays.

J. F. Brennan Construction of La Crosse, Wisconsin is the contractor for the project. The cost of the project is \$3.6 million. The project will be paid for using money accrued in the Shoreline and Waterway Management Section's Waterway Management Fund and annual Bond Bill appropriations provided to the Division/Section by the State Legislature.

The contractor is expected to mobilize equipment (e.g. pipeline) to the project site the week of November 11. Dredging is scheduled to commence the week of January 6, 2020 and take approximately 31 days to complete.